THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) After reports from Andhra Pradesh about some irregularities, the Union Government has issued directives to all State Governments to take stringent action against organizations indulging in illegal activities in the field of adoptions.

(b) to (d) Though no separate letter has been written to the State Home Ministers, all the State Governments have been asked to take necessary steps to prevent similar incidents in future which *inter alia*, include:

(i) Licensing of all Residential Homes and setting up of a state adoption unit.

(ii) Joint inspections should take place of orphanages and agencies.

(iii) Enforcement of Orphanages and other Charitable Homes Act, 1960.

(iv) Monitoring of adoption activities quoting recent happenings in Andhra Pradesh.

Further directives have also been issued to the concerned agencies and organizations to streamling their activities and adhere to the Government guidelines in this respect.

Policy for Mentally Retarded Women

1631. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to formulate a new policy for mentally retarded women to make them self-dependent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to check the growing number of mentally retarded women in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) provided loans at concessional rates to persons with disabilities

including mentally retarded women for training and self employment. Financial assistance is provided for running special schools, vocational training centres, respite centres etc. for persons with disabilities including mentally retarded women under the scheme to promote voluntary action for persons with disabilities. In order to enable and empower persons with sever disabilities to live independently and close to their community, a National Trust has been set up under National Trust for Welfare of Person with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999. This Act provides for preference to be given to women and severely disabled while earmarking funds for setting up of care-homes for persons with disabilities.

Performance of NGOs in Gujarat

1632. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the particulars of Voluntary Organisations in Gujarat receiving grants from Government;

(b) the performance of these organizations; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken to encourage the Non-Governmental Organizations in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The particulars of voluntary organizations in Gujarat receiving grants from the Government are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) and (c) The performance of the NGOs is monitored and evaluated through inspections by the representatives of the State Governments, nodal agencies and the Ministry's own officials. In order to further improve this process, formats for reporting of work done by the NGOs themselves and the proforma for inspections have been revised to get improved quality of data, which shall ,enable assessment of the effectiveness of the work done by the NGO and reduce the chances of defalcation of funds.

The schemes of the Ministry are publicized through media, website, organized seminars for Non-Governmental Organizations, meetings of Social Welfare Departments and Distrsict Collectors etc. periodically so that more number of NGOs all over the country can be covered under the various schemes of the Ministry.